

*AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS*

Please amend the claims as indicated hereafter. [Use ~~striketrough~~ for deleted matter and underlined for added matter.]

1. (Currently amended) A system for attenuating leakage signals in a communication system, comprising:

a multiple virtual line (MVL) transmitter configured to communicate signals onto a plurality of communication connections, each communication connection having a tip connection and a ring connection, the MVL transmitter having a first transmit output (Tx+) and a second transmit output (Tx-):

an amplifier-based coupler coupled between the MVL transmitter and the plurality of communication connections, the amplifier-based coupler comprising:

a first amplifier having an output at least coupled to the tip connection of the plurality of communication connections and at least one input coupled to the Tx+ output of the MVL transmitter, and configured to have a nearly-zero impedance characteristic; and

a second amplifier having an output at least coupled to the ring connection of the plurality of communication connections and at least one input coupled to the Tx- output of the MVL transmitter, and configured to have a nearly-zero impedance characteristic,

~~a plurality of amplifiers coupled between a plurality of communication connections and a communication device, at least one of said plurality of amplifiers configured to have a nearly-zero impedance characteristic such that at least one leakage signal originating on a first one communication connection of said plurality of communication connections cannot propagate from said first communication connection to a second communication connection of said plurality of communication connections.~~

2. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein at least one of said plurality of amplifiers is configured as a negative feedback amplifier.

3. (Original) The system of claim 1, further comprising a second plurality of amplifiers, said second plurality of amplifiers coupled between a second plurality of communication connections and said communication device.

4. (Original) The system of claim 1, wherein at least one of said plurality of communications connections is a digital subscriber loop.

5. (Currently amended) A method for shunting leakage signals in a communication system, the method comprising the steps of:

coupling ~~at least one~~ a first amplifier between a tip connection of a first communication connection and a first output (Tx+) of a communication device, said first amplifier having a nearly-zero impedance characteristic;

coupling a second amplifier between a ring connection of a first communication connection and a first output (Tx-) of a communication device, said second amplifier having a nearly-zero impedance characteristic; and

shunting at least one leakage signal originating on said first communication connection away from a second communication connection coupled to said communication device.

6.-11. Canceled

12. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein said first communication connection is physically coupled to said second communication connection.

13. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein said plurality of communication connections are physically coupled together.

14. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein said plurality of communication connections are physically coupled to said communication device.

15.-17. Canceled

18. (New) The system of claim 1, wherein said MVL transmitter time multiplexes a plurality of signals onto a single channel.

19. (New) The system of claim 1, wherein said MVL transmitter frequency multiplexes a plurality of signals onto a plurality of channels.

20. (New) The system of claim 1, wherein said MVL transmitter is a signal multiplexing communication device.

21. (New) A system for shunting leakage signals in a communication system, comprising:

means for coupling a first amplifier between a tip connection of a first communication connection and a first output (Tx+) of a communication device, said first amplifier having a nearly-zero impedance characteristic; and

means for coupling a second amplifier between a ring connection of a first communication connection and a first output (Tx-) of a communication device, said second amplifier having a nearly-zero impedance characteristic, such that at least one leakage signal originating on said first communication connection is shunted away from a second communication connection coupled to said communication device.

22. (New) The system of claim 21, wherein said coupling means further couples said second communication connection to said shunting means.